



Caltrans Division of Research,
Innovation and System Information

Research

Notes

Planning, Policy
and
Programming

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Project Title:
Displacement and Commuting
in the San Francisco Bay Area
and Beyond: An Analysis of the
Relationship Between the Housing
Crises, Displacement, and Long
Commutes

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Displacement and Commuting in the San Francisco Bay Area and Beyond

An analysis of the relationship between the housing crises,
displacement, and long commutes.

WHAT IS THE NEED?

The San Francisco Bay Area has seen rapid increases in its share of super-commuters, growing from a 2.3% share in 2005 to a 4.8% share in 2016 (Bennet, 2018). Several areas of the Central Valley surrounding the Bay Area have seen even higher proportions of super-commuters. For example, Stockton and Modesto, CA, respectfully, had 10.0% and 7.3% share of super-commuters in 2016, the most of any U.S. metropolitan area.

The current policy debate and popular press have begun to associate extreme commuting with a lack of affordable housing, but there has been little evidence on such an association between unaffordable housing and extreme commuting.

This proposed study aims to answer three questions:

1. Does migration from adjacent regions increase the share of super-commuting?
2. Who bears the burden of increased super-commuting: high income or low income, young or old?
3. Are particular industries driving the increase in super-commuting?



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WHAT ARE WE DOING?

The study will first identify areas of in-migration from the Bay Area to the Central Valley, then calculate the change of super-commuters, analyze whether the share of super-commuters is related to the share of in-migrants, and then disaggregate super-commuters by income, age, and industry.

WHAT IS OUR GOAL?

Outcomes of this study will inform policy development to link long commutes with the affordable housing crises. The study will fill a void on information on long commutes by measuring the changes in degree of super-commuting over time.

WHAT IS THE BENEFIT?

Caltrans, state agencies, and regional transportation planning agencies may use this study results to make future planning decisions based on the growth due to the increase of super commuting and resulting interconnectedness of regions, with ever growing inter-commutes.

WHAT IS THE PROGRESS TO DATE?

1. Kick-Off Meeting was held on September 11, 2020, with Project Panel.
2. We completed a one to two-page memo with literature highlights.
3. We extended our analysis of the California sample of the National Household Travel Survey to identify long commutes and super commuters.
4. Briefed Caltrans District 10 on the findings to date and workplan.
5. Analyzed two new datasets—Streetlight data and Sacramento Area Council of Governments to supplement this analysis.

6. We prepared a paper to the Transportation Research Board, annual meeting. It was accepted for the 2022 meeting. We also presented preliminary results at the California American Planning Association conference in September 2021.

IMAGE



Image 1: The rise of super commuting in the Bay Area and Beyond.